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BLACKHULL KAFIR (*Andropogon sorghum*).

Blackhull kafir is a dwarf, leafy variety of sorghum which is grown for both seed and forage. The stems are juicy and slightly sweet. The heads are club shaped and are borne on an erect stem. The individual grains are white, roundish, and flinty in nature. Blackhull kafir is adapted to practically the same region as milo, namely, the Texas Panhandle, most of Oklahoma, western Kansas, southeastern Colorado, and many parts of New Mexico, Arizona, and California. It requires a little longer growing season than milo. Thirty to forty bushels of grain and four to six tons of forage per acre are common yields.

Planting.—Kafir is essentially a warm-weather crop and should be planted from two to four weeks later than Indian corn, except in regions affected by the sorghum midge, where very early plantings are recommended.

The usual method of planting is in listed furrows, as this allows the plant to root deep in the soil and thus affords it better opportunity to withstand drought. In the more humid sections kafir is often planted with a surface planter. Planting in cultivated rows the same distance apart as Indian corn will require from 5 to 8 pounds of clean seed per acre. If forage alone is desired, the thicker seeding is advised. If planting for hay, drill the rows 12 to 18 inches apart.

Cultivation.—Blackhull kafir should be cultivated much the same as Indian corn. It is usually best to cultivate two or three times with the harrow while the plants are small, but as soon as sufficient growth is made the crop should be given a fairly deep and thorough cultivation. Two or three subsequent and shallower cultivations are desirable to conserve moisture. Care should be used to have these later cultivations shallow, in order to avoid breaking many feeding roots.

Harvesting.—If harvested for both grain and fodder the crop should be cut in the late dough stage. Cutting with a corn binder and shocking in the field is the least expensive method. A corn binder is the most practical method of harvesting if the crop is to be utilized as silage. If grown solely for the grain yield, it should be allowed to stand until the stems at the base of the head are dry. If the heads are cut by hand from the standing stalks the remainder of the crop can be utilized for pasture.

Feeding.—Blackhull kafir has about the same feeding value as milo, 10 pounds of the thrashed grain being equal to 9 of Indian corn. All classes of stock thrive on the grain, and horses, cattle, and sheep relish the fodder. Blackhull kafir also makes a very good silage.

Seed selection.—In most cases, home-grown seed will produce better than seed imported from a distance; thus it becomes important for every farmer to select and keep his own seed. The best time to make selections is in the field as soon as the earlier heads are mature. Medium dwarf, leafy plants without side branches and with little tendency to stool should be selected. It is also desirable to have the stems as juicy and sweet as possible. A good-sized, club-shaped head well filled at the butt and tip and entirely free from the boot is best. In all seed selection be careful to avoid hybrids. The exceedingly large heads are generally the result of hybridization or of some local variation in stand or soil conditions. Selections should be made 100 yards or more from any other variety of sorghum, as they all cross freely. By careful selection and the growing of your own seed, yields can be materially increased.

Suggestions.—As the best rate of seeding depends much upon the locality and the purpose for which the crop is grown, it is suggested that seedlings be made so as to place the plants 4, 8, 12, and 16 inches apart in the row, thus giving an opportunity for each grower to decide for himself the proper rate of planting for his conditions. Different rates of seeding might also be tried.

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